TL4908

Legal Aid Institute writes to armed forces commander

Original documents, translated from the Indonesia.

The following are the texts of two letters sent by the chair of the Indonesian Foundation of Legal Aid Institutes, Abdul Hakim Nusantara, to General Try Sutrisno, commander-in-chief of the Indonesian armed forces:

The first letter, dated 12 November said:

"We have received the news that on 11 November (sic) 1991, while people were burying (sic) two persons who had died two weeks earlier at a cemetery in Dili, there was an armed attack on the people at the ceremony, resulting in the deaths of around 115 people. There is strong reason to believe that those who perpetrated this action are from the local armed forces.

In view of this, we ask you, as armed forces commander,

1. To set up a verification team to examine the facts about this very disturbing event.

2. To announce publicly and frankly the results of this investigation."

The second letter, dated 13 November, reads as follows:

"Following our letter of 12 November concerning a series of disturbances in Dili, East Timor, on 28 October and 12 November 1991, along with additional information that has reached us as well as press reports published on 13 November which reinforce the belief that disturbances and violence occurred resulting in the deaths of a number of civilians, the Indonesian Foundation of Legal Aid Institutes once again calls on you, as armed forces commander-in-chief:

1. In conformity with the right of the public to have objective and factual information about that very disturbing event and to work towards a solution that conforms with humanitarian principles and justice, an Independent Fact-Finding Commission should be set up without delay, composed of persons from government, the legal profession and non-governmental organisations, to gather the facts fully and responsibly. The Legal Aid Institute is ready to participate in this Commission.

2. To announced the findings of this Commission, openly and honestly.

3. To charge those reponsible for breaking the law, according to legal procedures.

4. To bring to justice, without exception, all those who can be proven to have broken the law, in conformity with the principles of a fair trial.

5. To give full protection to innocent civilians so that they can be protected from violence and other extra-legal activities.

6. Efforts to restore security and order for the public should proceed in accordance with the laws in force, complying with due process of law, in conformity with basic principles and without undermining the foundations of our state based on the law.

Actions for solving problems that are based on violence will inevitably have consequences that not only conflict with the laws in force but can only result in new social disturbances.